

METHOD, SYSTEM AND PROGRAM FOR  
DETERMINING SELLING PRICE, AND  
COMPUTER-READABLE STORAGE MEDIUM FOR STORING THE PROGRAM

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FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a technique of cooperative buying by a plurality of purchasers on a network such as the Internet. More particularly, the present invention relates to a technique for determining a selling price that is appropriate for both purchasers and suppliers based on an order quantity and a period from the time of order acceptance to a delivery date.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

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A network system for a plurality of intending purchasers to do cooperative buying on a network such as the Internet has been proposed to date. Costs of perishable foods, some industrial products, industrial parts and the like significantly fluctuate depending on an order quantity and a period from the time of order to a delivery date. The above-mentioned network system is useful in purchasing such products at a lower price than the case of an individual purchase.

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A network system of a conventional type is established by connecting a plurality of buyer terminals, a plurality of product supplier terminals and an order-receiving center terminal via a network.

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The product supplier terminal sends product information including the price, specification and the like of a product provided by the product supplier, and schedule information to the order-receiving center terminal. The order-receiving center terminal controls such product information and schedule information sent from the plurality of product supplier terminals. The prices of the products are determined by the respective product suppliers based on an estimation of the total order quantity (total quantity made by cooperative buying).

The buyer terminal, as operated by a buyer, requests product information to the order-receiving center terminal. Upon receiving the request from the buyer terminal, the order-receiving center terminal sends the product information and schedule information under control to the buyer terminal that has made the request. The product information and the schedule information sent from the order-receiving terminal are displayed on the display screen of the buyer terminal, based on which the intending purchaser selects a product and determines a delivery date and sends order information including the order quantity, the delivery date and the like to the order-receiving center terminal. The selling price is fixed to the price included in the product information. Upon receiving the order information for the product, the order-receiving center terminal sends the order information to the product supplier terminal providing that product.

According to the above-described conventional technique, the product suppliers have to estimate the total order quantity to determine the prices of the products. Therefore, if the estimation goes wrong, either the product supplier or the purchaser may suffer a loss. Specifically, the supplier will suffer a loss if the total order quantity is smaller than expected while the purchaser will suffer a loss if the total order quantity is larger than expected.

The present invention can avoid such a risk and has an objective of determining an appropriate selling price that is profitable for both the buyers and the product suppliers based on an actual order quantity and a period from the time of order acceptance to the delivery date.

#### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to a method for determining a selling price of the invention, a selling price of a product for intending purchasers who have ordered the same product for the same delivery date is determined based on the standard selling price determined by the product supplier, a period from the order acceptance to the delivery date and the total order quantity of the product for that delivery date, so that the selling price is almost the same as the standard selling price if the total order quantity is small and is significantly less expensive than the standard selling price if the total order quantity is large. Accordingly, the